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SUBJECT: (U) Secretary Rice's Participation in the December 15, 2008 UN Security Council Meeting on Zimbabwe

¶1. (U) December 15, 2008; 3:00 PM; New York City

¶2. (U) Participants:

U.S.

The Secretary

Ambassador Khalilzad

Ambassador DiCarlo

Assistant Secretary Hook

Assistant Secretary Frazer

United Nations

Security General Ban Ki-moon

United Nations Security Council

Croatian Prime Minister Sanader (Council President)

United Kingdom Foreign Secretary Miliband

The Permanent Representatives of China, France, Russia, Belgium, Indonesia, Panama, South Africa, Costa Rica, Libya, Vietnam

The Deputy Permanent Representative of Italy

¶3. (SBU) SUMMARY: UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon told the Security Council on December 15 that Zimbabwe's leaders had failed to address the crisis in the country and that their inaction had caused a dramatic deterioration in the situation as witnessed by a widespread and growing incidence of cholera. The Secretary supported Ban's call for heightened international community action in Zimbabwe, adding that the crisis there was particularly tragic in that it was man-made and left no doubt that the man responsible was Robert Mugabe. British Foreign Secretary Miliband said the "real disease is the misrule of the regime." France, Belgium, and Italy strongly supported a heightened Security Council role in mitigating the crisis. Russia was very critical of "both sides" in Zimbabwe for failing to appreciate the crisis. END SUMMARY.

¶4. (SBU) In a 90-minute meeting closed to television and the press on December 15, UNSYG Ban used, what was for him, unusually pointed language in criticizing Zimbabwe's leadership. Ban said Robert Mugabe had "not been forthcoming" and that his regime had failed to address the political crisis confronting the country. This inattention, Ban said, had created a dramatic deterioration in living conditions and a humanitarian crisis featuring a widespread outbreak of cholera, dependency on international assistance for the necessities of life, and the collapse of health and education infrastructures. He put the number of cholera cases at 18,000, adding that projections had the total eventually reaching 60,000. He said neither the Zimbabwe leadership nor the mediators had welcomed a UN role and had "left limited space for my good offices."

¶5. (SBU) The Secretary said Ban's report was very difficult to listen to, particularly because the devastating crisis he described was not the result of natural disaster but was man-made instead. She called Mugabe's recent accusation that the international community was unleashing disease on Zimbabwe the ranting of a man who was either evil or had gone mad. She concluded that we were long past the time for Mugabe to go and that a power-sharing government could not include him.

¶6. (SBU) UK Foreign Secretary Miliband urged Council members to agree on four points: that Zimbabwe's predicament has been caused by misrule and corruption; that Zimbabwe's people had clearly voted for change; that the crisis in Zimbabwe, especially in its health aspects, has become regional; and that the international community, most particularly the Security Council, needed to show leadership by helping to restart a process that could lead to progress on the humanitarian and political fronts.

¶7. (SBU) French PermRep Ripert said implementation of the September 15 power-sharing agreement between the Zimbabwean parties ZANU-PF and MDC was being blocked by the Mugabe regime and that human rights abuses continued as evidenced by the recent abduction of activist Jestina Mukoko. Belgian PermRep Grauls criticized unnamed Council members for preventing the Council from becoming unambiguously seized with the crisis in Zimbabwe by holding a public session with a clear agenda listing rather than the generic "Peace and Security in Africa." Italy, Panama, and Costa Rica agreed that the session should have been open to the public in order to shine a light on conditions in Zimbabwe. Costa Rican PermRep Urbina added that the UN should play a more active role in resolving the crisis.

¶8. (SBU) Russian PermRep Churkin said that neither side to the Zimbabwe dispute seemed to be in a hurry to resolve the crisis and that both acted "almost like it does not exist." He urged continuation of the mediation efforts of former South African President Mbeki. South Africa PermRep Kumalo, after declining to speak initially, offered a few words after being directly invited by Miliband. Kumalo said he had not spoken "because I agree with what has been said." He said the negotiation process could produce a prime minister by Christmas but, "because we try to push, it moves very slowly."

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International Response

¶9. (C) Advani said the international community must deliver a coordinated message to the Pakistani leadership that it must permanently put a stop to terrorism emanating from its territory. The Secretary agreed that the international community should call on Pakistan to respond in a responsible manner. She said that the USG had a special interest in being involved in this matter because six Americans had lost their lives in the attacks. Citizens of many other countries had died in these attacks as well. She noted that she had stopped in London on the way to India and the United States and UK are in agreement that they need to deliver a unified message to Pakistan.

GOP Recognizes the Responsibility

¶10. (C) The Secretary said she has spoken to President Zardari and believes that he understands that Pakistan has a special responsibility to respond in a credible manner because Pakistan territory is involved. She observed that the internal political situation in Pakistan is such that the civilian government finds it difficult to respond in the manner it would like to. She counseled that the United States, India, and other countries should work together to give the civilian government a chance to respond.

State of Denial

¶11. (C) Advani observed that Pakistani state of denial on Pakistani involvement in this attack is unacceptable. He said that Pakistani leaders have a disinclination to do anything other than make empty offers to cooperate in investigating something that they know fully well originated in their country. What matters, according to him, is that Pakistan take concrete measures, not provide mere assurances. In his view these measures must start with steps to dismantle the infrastructure of cross-border terrorism aimed at India. The Secretary responded that she believes President Zardari wants to do that but faces internal constraints. Advani said he is aware of the multiple centers of power in Pakistan.

Instrument of State Policy

¶12. (C) Advani noted that Pakistan has long used terrorism and terrorist groups as an instrument of state policy. It had begun deploying these groups in a proxy war, according to him, after conventional war failed to wrest Kashmir from Indian control. He said that then-President Musharraf had shared with him the inability of the GOP to control or disband these groups, telling Advani in 2005 that "once a country adopts a certain approach (i.e., to support these groups), it is difficult to reverse it." Advani added that the GOP had not realized that these groups would finally turn on their masters, as they had now begun to do. He emphasized, however, that the Lashkar-e-Taiba is treated differently because it has not yet acted against Pakistan. The Secretary responded that the Pakistani leadership is starting to understand that some of its past associations with extremist groups are coming back to haunt it. She felt that President Zardari, who lost wife Benazir Bhutto to a terrorist attack, certainly understands this.

Kashmir: De facto to De Jure

¶13. (C) Advani suggested the Secretary could also contribute to lowering tension in the region by "making Islamabad realize that no gain will come" from its fixation with Kashmir. According to him, India will never part with Kashmir and after 60 years, "what was de facto has become de jure." He noted that Pakistan had assured India of this in the 1972 Simla Agreement but ignored its commitment. In his view, Kashmir is not the "core problem and if it is a problem today, it became one only after Pakistan used aggression there" he said. When asked by the Secretary and A/S Boucher whether a resolution to the Kashmir issue is possible if Pakistan agrees to accept the Line of Control and then takes steps against terrorist groups targeting India, Advani responded: "Mumbai comes first. The country expects a clear and firm response." He evaded the question about resolving Kashmir and pointed instead to a 1994 Indian parliament resolution on the liberation of "Pakistan Occupied Kashmir."

Appreciation for Afghanistan

¶14. (C) Advani offered his support and encouragement to the United States as it faces enormous challenges in fighting two wars and dealing with the financial crisis. The Secretary thanked him and noted that the situation in Iraq was going well with the country taking steps towards stable government and democracy. In Afghanistan, the problems that the United States and its allies are dealing with are: safe havens for insurgents in Pakistan,

strengthening the government, and reconstruction and economic stability. The Secretary expressed her appreciation for the significant Indian effort in Afghanistan.

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